



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

Michael O. Leavitt
Governor

Robert L. Morgan
Executive Director

Lowell P. Braxton
Division Director

1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210

PO Box 145801

Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801

(801) 538-5340 telephone


(801) 359-3940 fax

(801) 538-7223 TTY

www.nr.utah.gov

October 4, 2002

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Paul Baker, Senior Reclamation Biologist 

RE: Site Inspection, Robert Clark, Emeryide Mine, S/015/053, Emery County, Utah

Date of Inspection: September 26, 2002
Time of Inspection: 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.
Conditions: Mostly clear, 70's
Participants: Jeff McKenzie, BLM; Paul Baker, DOGM

Purpose of Inspection:

Mr. McKenzie and I were in the area for other reasons, and we decided to follow through on problems noted in earlier inspections.

Getting to the site:

Directions to the site are given in the report for the June 7, 2002, inspection.

Observations:

This mine is adjacent to and between mines operated by Bret and Tom Clark. There are essentially three levels with a product stockpile on the upper level. The middle level is an old loading area and has roads accessing both Bret and Robert Clark's portals on the lower level. I am not entirely certain of the boundaries between Tom's, Robert's, and Bret's sites.

On the middle bench, there were three barrels that appeared to contain oil products. Although they were not labeled, they were nearly full. Also on this level was an old car battery.

I believe the entrance and portal shown in Photos 1 and 2 are part of Robert Clark's operation. One portal is fenced, and the other has a locked gate that has now been repaired so it would be impossible to enter without tearing down part of the fence or gate.

When representatives of the BLM, including Mr. McKenzie, visited this site in May, they expressed concern that cables coming from two of the portals might be shot wire. When I visited this site in June with Tom Rasmussen and Dean Nyffeler of the BLM Price office, they decided the wires were actually telephone cables. Mr. McKenzie did not seem to be certain whether it was shot wire or telephone cable, but he was concerned that one of the portals (Photo 2) has a sign indicating there may be explosives inside. He felt that, since we were not certain whether it was a shot wire, something should be done to get rid of the wire.

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In May, the BLM representatives noticed some rocks that appeared to be breaking off from above the fenced portal (Photo 1). I had not known what this comment was referring to, but Mr. McKenzie showed me an area where about three or four large blocks of sandstone have rotated outward and appear to be on the verge of falling. (Unfortunately, I did not photograph this area.) If these were to fall, they would endanger anyone on the portal pad and would probably also roll to the county road below.

The berm on the pad outslope is breached, and the operator has put rocks and logs around this breach in an apparent attempt to stabilize it (Photo 3). There is some sediment leaving the site through this breach.

As one travels north from the portals toward the middle bench, there are some hoses and brattice that need to be cleaned up (Photo 4). Toward the top, there is a pile of what appears to be mine waste. It looks like this was in plastic bags and dumped here (Photo 5).

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Since the last inspection, the operator has performed the most urgent work that needed to be done at this site, that is locking the portal gate. Additional work needs to be done, but it is less urgent with the possible exception of stabilizing the rocks as discussed below. It is impossible to say how soon these rocks could fall, but they appear to be unstable enough that it could happen any time.

The operator should clean up the hoses, brattice cloth, and mine waste and the car battery if this is the operator's responsibility. Ideally, the barrels would be stored in a rubber lined concrete facility, but for this operation, it would be acceptable to have a lined earthen pit.

To remove any questions about the wire leading into the portals, it should either be removed or coiled and put in the portals.

The rocks above the portal in Photo 1 appear to create a safety hazard both for miners and for the public. The operator needs to closely evaluate this situation and may want to hire a specialist to determine whether anything needs to be done to either stabilize these rocks or to intentionally cause them to fall. If the operator causes them to fall, it will be necessary to coordinate this with the county sheriff to ensure no one is on the road.

There is little that can be done about water flowing uncontrolled over the outslope because the pad was not intended to be an impoundment and water needs to be able to leave the site. The operator should find a place where the pad outslope is already self-armored—possibly the slope below the existing breach—and install a notched silt fence at the breach. This would treat water from the mine site and reduce the amount of additional sediment being eroded from the hill.

jb

cc: Robert Clark
Dean Nyffeler, Price BLM
Jeff McKenzie, State BLM Office

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ATTACHMENT

Photographs
S/015/053
Emeryide Mine



Photo 1. Fenced opening--not truly a portal.



Photo 2. Second portal.



Photo 3. Breached berm.



Photo 4. Hoses (mostly in the shadow to the right) and brattice that should be cleaned up.



Photo 5. Mine waste that should be cleaned up. Note the plastic garbage bags near the center of the photo.